



CDSS
CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

NEWS RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES UNVEILS EBUS TO ASSIST FOSTER YOUTH IN ACCESSING HIGHER EDUCATION *Retrofitted Bus Provides Online Educational and Job Training Services*

SACRAMENTO – As part of its Foster Care Awareness Month activities, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in partnership with the California Community College Foundation, today unveiled the Chafee Educational Training Voucher (ETV) eBus that will provide educational, financial and community resources to foster youth in a more personalized format.

The eBus is a 40-foot retrofitted computer lab, equipped with two-way Internet connectivity via satellite. Between now and February 2006, the eBus will travel statewide, stopping at designated locations to provide resource assistance to foster youth pursuing post-secondary education with the aid of Chafee ETV grants

“This is an exciting project that combines technology and educational resources to deliver improved outcomes for some of our most vulnerable youth aging out of the foster care system,” said Dennis Boyle, director of CDSS. “Our new eBus fills a critical need in helping to motivate and support foster youth as they prepare for independence and a successful future.”

Clea Owens, eBus program coordinator and a former foster youth herself who is studying for her master’s degree, will conduct workshops and offer counseling aboard the eBus that will facilitate outreach activities at educational institutions, community and faith-based organizations and job sites. Youth will have the opportunity to use any one of the 13 workstations on board to apply online for grants, colleges, vocational schools and more. Also, bilingual resource materials and Spanish-speaking staff are available.

“The eBus makes it possible to deliver enhanced online access to educational, job search and mentoring resources directly to foster youth in their local community,” said Owens. “All youth served by the eBus will receive useful materials to aid them in their academic or professional careers.”

Chafee ETV grants are available to foster youth and provide up to \$5,000 per student for college or vocational training expenses, such as tuition, books, clothing, transportation, computers and room and board. In order to qualify, applicants must have been in foster care between their 16 and 18 birthdays and must be at least a part-time student with satisfactory academic progress.

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